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## **Folk linguistics**

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## folk linguistics

subdiscipline of sociolinguistics which studies non-linguists' notions about language.

*Laienlinguistik*

Teilgebiet der Soziolinguistik, das die Vorstellungen linguistischer Laien von Sprache untersucht.

Folk linguistics seeks to discover the notions and beliefs of linguistic laypeople about language. It focuses on traditional anthropological and ethnological questions on the lay view of language, such as perceptions of and attitudes towards linguistic variation, assumptions about the language learning process, etc. The purpose of folk linguistics is to contribute to an ethnology of language, and to create an understanding of the assumptions laypeople hold. This is needed for many activities in applied linguistics (e.g. studies on attitude change, language teaching, etc.) and for uncovering the mechanisms that lead to variation in language use and, in the long run, language change.

Folk linguistics typically utilizes a number of different types of discourse analysis and special methods for eliciting language-related data from laypeople, such as those developed in perceptual dialectology. The major research questions include, amongst others, the subjective classification of dialect areas within a speech community and the categorisation of dialects and sociolects as "correct" or "pleasant" (cf. NIEDZIELSKI/PRESTON 2000).

The term *folk linguistics* is often used not only for the linguistic discipline, but also for its research object, i.e. the notions and intuitions of non-linguists about language.

### References

dialectology (Theories and Methods in Linguistics )

discourse analysis (Theories and Methods in Linguistics )

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